

**Falls Church Housing Commission
Tuesday, March 14, 2006
Meeting Minutes**

Call to Order:

Call to order at 7:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present: Mr. Joseph Bodmer, Mr. Don Brobst, and Ms. Valora Thompson

Absent: Commissioner Eric Timar

Guest: Steve Sprague, Board Member, Falls Church Housing Corporation

Staff: Tennille Smith Parker, Housing and Human Services Division

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of February 16, 2006 were approved with the following correction: Strike “Mr. Brobst indicated” from 2nd page. Mr. Brobst made a motion to approve the correct minutes; Mr. Bodmer seconded the motion.

New Business:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Prioritization

Staff reviewed the limited amount of CDBG funds with increasing requests and presented the Presidents Fiscal Year (F) 07 budget with changes to the HUD CDBG program.

Mr. Brobst indicated that he liked the City of Falls Church’s existing annual CDBG process [of soliciting proposals for all CDBG eligible activities], rather than prioritizing it for specific activities. He expressed concern that prioritization may alienate good organizations and it could run the risk of good programs not coming into the City

Ms. Thompson also expressed wanting an open process to encourage any good application.

Chair Bodmer indicated there is already some prioritization among the grantees given the funding limitations on CDBG public service activity. Mr. Bodmer also indicated support for focusing priorities but does not support combining CDBG funds with the City’s Community Services Fund because it creates a “robbing Peter to pay Paul” scenario. Mr. Bodmer also indicated that the City’s grant application could be written to weigh points on ability and back record on City residents.

Staff indicated that the City’s preference is to target resources to activities that serve residents and meet priority needs and rewarding applications that have and will serve City residents.

The Commissioners voted to have an open and accessible application to encourage good ideas; to give more weight on application for “serving City residents;” and to not limit the type of application in the solicitation.

Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Prices

Staff presented research and recommendations for ADU prices, including all affordable housing that the City negotiates for within proposed residential projects. After reviewing the information, the Chair expressed a desire for the City to be flexible in the negotiation of ADU prices and income targets served within these projects. Chair Bodmer made a motion that the ADU prices shall be up to 80% of the HUD Area median income, as provided in the staff report, and that the City shall negotiate the range of units based on City needs. The Commissioners voted unanimously to support the motion.

Old Business – No old business; agenda omitted to remove Special Exception Application

Other Items Not on the Agenda

Housing Commission Resolution for Affordable Housing

Chair e Bodmer expressed an interest in passing a resolution (to Council) that would indicated that all future negotiations for proffers in Special Exception projects should be for affordable housing units rather than cash in lieu of affordable housing. Mr. Brobst indicated that the resolution was good, but that he did not want to “tie the City’s hands” by not taking cash. He also expressed interest in finding comparable unit construction costs. Chair Bodmer accepted the comments and revised his proposed resolution to state that the City shall seek affordable housing units, rather than cash, unless the cash contribution would be the equivalent of 12.5% of the units as affordable.

Staff indicated that there is merit for both cash and units, given that units producer the only affordable homeownership opportunities in the City, while cash assists the City with its affordable housing preservation (acquisition) goals. To assist the Commission, staff offered to provide data on construction costs to determine a specific cash contribution.

Staff Report:

- Falls Church Housing Corporation update (given by Mr. Sprague): FCHC recently celebrated the opening of the new clubhouse at Winter Hill Apartments. Also provided update that corporation is looking at its housing inventory and focusing on where to use resources to expand the stock of permanently affordable housing.
- Staff reported that the City Manager’s budget recommendations include significant affordable housing items: the addition of a development specialist to the Housing & Human Services Staff, \$2 million in the Capital Improvements Plan for preservation, and the PPEA consultant to develop acquisition plan. The recommendation for dedicated funding for the City’s Affordable Housing Fund was not included in the Manager’s recommendations.

- Reminder: ADU lottery March 16, 2006 @ 7:00 P.M.
- Reminder: Community Development (CD) Week April 17 – 23. April 10th is the date the Mayor will provide the CD week proclamation to Commissioner Brobst. The week celebration will also include an article in the FCNP and the annual Housing Commission City tour on April 21, 2006.
- Reminder: Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers (HAND) Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon on June 5 @ Fairview Park Marriott in Falls Church. If attending, please notify staff and indicate if you need a vegetarian meal.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05p.m.

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